



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

## San Diego Public Library

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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### **AN EXHIBIT PRESENTING THE LIFE AND LITERATURE OF SÁNDOR MÁRAI WILL BE ON DISPLAY AT SAN DIEGO PUBLIC LIBRARY** *Traveling display stops in San Diego after touring Latin America*

**SAN DIEGO** – The City of San Diego Public Library, in partnership with the Consulate General of the Republic of Hungary in Los Angeles and the House of Hungary, will host an exhibit and panel discussion Sunday, February 22, 2009 that commemorates the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Sandor Marai's birth. The exhibit is displayed in 2<sup>nd</sup> floor corridor gallery of the Central Library, and the panel discussion will take place in the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor auditorium at 2:00pm. Central Library is located at 820 E Street in downtown San Diego.

In November, 2000, the Petőfi Museum of Literature in Budapest, Hungary, commemorated the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Sándor Márai's birth with an exhibition presenting the author's entire oeuvre. The collection drew primarily on the author's papers and the documents owned by the museum. It then travelled to several European cities, and its popularity became another measure of the Márai's phenomenal success. In many places, the exhibition hosts published a catalogue. The bilingual volume produced to exacting standards entitled *Luce e mare* (2003) explores Márai's relationship to Italy. The catalogue to the exhibition staged as part of *Magyar Magic – Hungary in Focus 2004*, a year-long celebration of Hungarian culture in Britain, was the first complete English language publication about the author. Two years later, the novel, *Embers*, was put on stage in London's West End, featuring Jeremy Irons. The success of the play led to a small exhibition in the lobby of the theatre open throughout the entire run of the show.

Last year, a second collection presenting the life and literature of Márai toured in Latin-America, and in February, it will be on display in San Diego and Los Angeles. What is the meaning of this almost decade long success? Its staying power is due to the unbroken success of the author, whose fame now extends to most of the world. This credits not just Márai, the traveler, who

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visited many countries but, more importantly, Márai the author whose life and work was inseparable. He is one of the most confessional artists, whose writings reflected his life, and following Wildean rules, many motifs and events in his books can be traced to biographic sources.

*Embers*, *Esther's Inheritance*, and *Confessions of a Bourgeois* draw a portrait of a writer, who although as an author of the bourgeoisie can only resuscitate his moribund class, still holds sway through the decades. What seemed insignificant in Germany in the 1950s (*Embers* published as *Die Kerzen brennen ab*, Wien-Berlin, 1950) was the triumphant sensation of the Frankfurt Book Fair at the end of the century. Humanity, eternal human values, relationships, the main building blocks of the author's writings, are indispensable parts of our existence even in the (post)modern era.

The collection presents the traveler of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, who lived the last years of his life in San Diego, through photographs, manuscripts, book covers and locations, to bring the visitors closer to the life, works and world of Márai, and perhaps closer their own selves.

Learn about other events at the San Diego Public Library's Central Library and 35 branches, find links to numerous additional resources, or search for materials in the Library's catalog online at [www.sandiegolibrary.org](http://www.sandiegolibrary.org)

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